



Dear

THE CHESTER TO BANGOR TRUNK ROAD (A55) (JUNCTIONS 16 AND 16A IMPROVEMENT REALIGNMENT AND SLIP ROADS) ORDER 202-

THE CHESTER TO BANGOR TRUNK ROAD (A55) (JUNCTIONS 16 AND 16A IMPROVEMENT REALIGNMENT AND SLIP ROADS) (SIDE ROADS) ORDER 202-

(Ref J16-R003 A55J15J16-2021-090-R-J16)

I refer to your online submission relating to the above Draft Orders dated 07 May 2021. Please note that your submission has been registered as an Objection and you should have received a Welsh Government letter dated 25 May 2021 confirming that a Public Local Inquiry is to be held.

In your submission you said *"I would ask that the road changes are adjusted to take into account changes since Brexit, changes to transport since covid, & the climate emergency. I would also ask that more is done to reassure people living in Pendalar who feel that they would be cut off from the rest of the village. It would also mean that some people would have reduced views, reduced light, & more pollution. Noise pollution in the village would increase too with cars travelling at higher speeds. Also the west bound junction out of the village often floods which could mean that the village could be cut off whilst the work is going ahead. Many residents feel that it is a huge waste of money that could be better spent elsewhere. And some question whether slip roads are actually statistically safer than roundabouts. Perhaps the traffic lights could be used on the roundabout for a few months to assess the effect that has.."*

I have set out below our response to your concerns.

Road changes since Brexit, Covid

When you talk about "Road changes" I have assumed you mean changes in traffic flows. There is no doubt that Brexit and Covid have had a short-term impact on traffic levels and in all likelihood, there will be some longer-term impacts as well. Interim observations suggest that traffic levels are at a similar level as shown before the pandemic, but the make-up of traffic is different. There has been a reduction in the frequency of travel to work, as more working from home has taken place. However, there has been an increase in work travel by car as people have migrated from Public Transport. Additionally, recreation travel has increased as people holiday in the UK. How this is reflected in population growth, employment growth, social wellbeing and mobility, and ultimately long-term traffic growth, is difficult to say at present. There is, however, no reason to suspect that there will be a significant downturn in traffic volumes.

Climate Emergency

I note your concerns about the Climate Emergency. To put the impact of the Scheme in context, the annual Welsh carbon baseline is 56 million tonnes. Annual carbon emissions for Wales averaged 41.2 million tonnes



(2016 to 2020) and Carbon Budget 2 for 2021-2025 is reduced to 35.5 million tonnes per year. The total construction carbon emissions for the proposed project are estimated to be about 20,600 tonnes. This therefore represents about 0.06% or about 1/1700th of the carbon budget and is not expected to materially affect the Welsh Government's ability to achieve its target. But, throughout the further design of the scheme and construction, continuing efforts will be made to minimise carbon emissions wherever possible and such measures will be outlined within the Construction Environmental Management Plan.

Impact on Pendalar

This objection is not relevant to the Junction 16 and 16A scheme. A response to this has been provided in our Junction 15 response letter.

Impact on views, reduced light and pollution

In addition to accessibility, we understand that you are also concerned about the impact on views, light and pollution. You can find information regarding how these are addressed, as follows:

- **Views:** The visual impacts and proposed mitigation are described in Chapter 9 of the Environmental Statement. The design of the road and the proposed mitigation measures have taken into account the desire of residents to keep open views to the sea. The scale of visual impact that would result from the Scheme, in addition to the existing A55 and traffic, was considered by the project team to be worthy of effective visual screening, particularly from residential properties close the existing road. A large false cutting, an earthwork mound, is proposed which will screen views of the Scheme and traffic while allowing views over the top to the sea. The false cutting would have a shallow slope facing the houses of Dwygyfylchi which would be topped by a masonry wall. The steeper roadside slope would be planted with coastal tree and shrub species to enhance the screening and landscape integration.
- **Light:** During design we considered how we might reduce the amount of highway lighting by comparison with the existing road so as to reduce light spill impacting on 'Dark Skies' within the Snowdonia National Park. We have not been able to achieve complete removal of lighting for reasons of road safety and good visibility. However, any new lighting that is provided would be to a modern design with more controlled light spread.
- **Noise:** The assessment of the scheme in accordance with the government requirements indicates that the proposed mitigation (which includes low noise surfacing and noise barriers where required) is appropriate to reduce impacts to a level which is not significant within the study area. Please see Chapter 13 of the Environmental Statement (ES) for further details.
- **Air pollution:** The modelling of changes in air quality has informed the assessment of the ecological effects on sensitive receptors, in particular the features associated with the designated sites. The assessment has found that with mitigation put in place in the construction contract, by means of a Construction Environmental Management, the effect of construction, such as due to dust, on air pollution would not be significant. Modelling has confirmed that the effects of the Scheme traffic on local air quality are judged to be not significant with an overall slight improvement in air quality concentrations.

Concerns that flooding to the west of the village could mean it is cut off during construction

Based on the description in the objection, we assume that you are not referring to the Junction 16 and 16A scheme. A response to this has been provided in our Junction 15 response letter.

Scheme is a waste of money

All schemes of this nature are required to appraised using the Welsh Transport Planning Appraisal Guidance (WelTAG) 2017 procedure. WelTAG is a framework for assessing proposed changes to the transport system. It contains best practice for the development, appraisal and evaluation of proposed transport interventions in Wales including Value for Money. It has been developed by the Welsh Government to ensure that public funds are invested in a way that ensures they maximise contribution to the well-being of Wales, as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The output of the WelTAG appraisal is the Business

Case for the Scheme and the Outline Business Case Report, which was published with the Draft Orders, can be found at Appendix 3.2 of the Environmental Statement ([A55 junctions 16 and 16: environmental statement 3a appendices 2 to 5 | GOV.WALES](#)). This will be considered by the Inspector at the Public Local Inquiry in making his recommendations.

Safety of slip roads versus roundabouts and why existing traffic lights can't be used?

Based on the description in the objection, we assume that you are not referring to the Junction 16 and 16A scheme. A response to this has been provided in our Junction 15 response letter.

I hope I have satisfactorily addressed the points you have raised.

Should you require clarification, or wish to discuss the matters prior to responding, please contact Rob Griffiths of Ramboll as follows: Tel: 07918 720458 / Email: Robert.Griffiths@ramboll.co.uk.

Yours faithfully

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Project Engineer – A55 Junctions 15/16 Improvement Scheme

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